

Serial No. 09/832,654

Customer No. 07278

Attorney Docket No. 06727/100J087-US1

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-25 and 32-48. Claims 45-48 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Communication filed on December 13, 2005 was inadvertently submitted in error. This Amendment is being filed to Replace the Communication filed on December 13, 2005. The substitute Amendment filed on January 23, 2006 (see postcard receipt, annexed as Exhibit 1) has evidently been lost by the Patent and Trademark Office and this substitute Amendment is now being filed by facsimile in order to expedite grant of a patent on this application.

Claims 45-48 were objected for depending from rejected base claims but were deemed to recite allowable subject matter. Applicant has therefore amended independent claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 to incorporate the limitations of claims 45-48, which are now canceled. Applicant believes this amendment should be entered notwithstanding the present final rejection of the claims, since it will put all the claims in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-15, 18-25, 32-37 and 40-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Ito (EP 0898378) in view of Youngs et al. (US 6,600,918). Applicant disagrees with the grounds of rejection, as explained in response to the previous Official Action in this case. Nevertheless, for the sake of expediting issuance of a patent on the subject matter that the Examiner found to be patentable, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 to incorporate the limitations of claims 45-48, now canceled. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute broader claims in a continuation of this application.

Thus, independent claims 1, 18, 23 and 40 are now believed to be patentable over the cited art. In view of the patentability of the independent claims, dependent claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9-15, 19-22, 24, 25, 32-39 and 41-45 are also believed to be patentable.

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Dependent claims 16, 17, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Ito in view of Young and further in view of Witkowski (US 2002/0197955) or Chen (US 6,134,456). In view of the patentability of independent claims 1 and 23, from which these claims depend, claims 16, 17, 38 and 39 are also believed to be patentable.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

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Respectfully submitted



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